MMR NO. 75, BLAIR FOULDS

Master Model Railroader Number 75 is Blair Foulds of Millwood, New York. Blair retired in 1970 after 42 years in industrial marketing and management posts and has been a widower since 1973. He has a son, a daughter and seven grandchildren, so there is hope of a continuing tradition of model railroading in the Foulds family.

A MODEL RAILROADER magazine purchased at a newsstand in Grand Central Terminal late in 1934 introduced Blair to the hobby. He immediately started modeling HO scale electric traction and has stayed with that specialty ever since. His first trolley model was completed in 1935. A GE-type steeple-cab loco constructed of sheet brass, it may have been the first HO scale trolley. Many others have followed. According to Blair, the complete lack of swivel-truck drives and the scarcity of small motors in the mid-30s made it necessary to invent and improvise, sometimes with dubious results. This situation eased when gas-electric car drives became available, followed by trolley car drives with more suitable wheelbases.

Blair has built several layouts over the years. The largest, and perhaps best scenicked, was described in RAILROAD MODEL CRAFTSMAN of July, 1971, in which the editor also reviewed Blair's early contributions to trolley modeling. His present layout was started in 1971 and includes about 450 feet of track, a disproportionate amount of it yard space to accommodate the many pieces of rolling stock Blair has accumulated. All trackage is under overhead wire, with vertical catenary on the main line. An interesting feature is that the mainline can be operated either as two rail, to accommodate visiting equipment, or with both rails grounded when running on the overhead. While basically faithful to HO scale, Blair has built an O scale interurban which he takes to trolley meets and conventions.

Blair is a long-time and very active NMRA member. (His membership number in precomputer days was 0412.) The standards which he developed for the Tappan Zee Model Railroad Club in the late 30s were published in the August, 1941, MODEL RAILROADER and, in 1946, became the basis for the first S-5 Electric Traction NMRA Standard. He did much of the research for the S-6 Traction Clearance Standards, authored the Traction Plans Index published by the NMRA in 1972, and is chairman of the Traction Standards Committee. He has given a number of clinics and has written **BULLETIN** articles on traction-related subjects. Blair's participation in the Achievement Program began in 1973 after he won an award for a trolley motor car model at the Atlanta National Convention. He now has Achievement Certificates for Motive Power, Cars, Structures, Electrical Engineering, Civil Engineering, Association Volunteer and Author.

In addition to Blair's hobby activities he is involved in a volunteer civic function related to forward planning and community problems in the Town of New Castle, NY.

Blair feels strongly that an active hobby like model railroading, and participation in community activities, can provide incentive and interest during the retirement years.

MMR_0075 Blair Foulds